



The National Spinal Cord Injury Association

Leading the way in maximizing  
the quality of life and opportunities for people  
with spinal cord injuries and diseases  
since 1948

June 1, 2011

Marlene Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Ms. Dortch:

United Spinal Association supports the recently announced acquisition of T-Mobile by AT&T and request that our enclosed comments be included in the FCC's docket for public comment for the 11-65 proceeding pertaining to the announced acquisition.

Access to communications is no longer a luxury, and it is especially critical for millions of Americans with spinal cord injuries or disorders, and their employers, families and friends. Wireless technologies significantly contribute to the daily lives of Americans with disabilities. They increase opportunities for: civic and social participation; connecting with loved ones and support systems; access to current information and other resources; and workforce participation.

AT&T has a long history of working with the disability community and has collaborated with our subsidiary organization, the National Spinal Cord Industry Association. The arrangement between AT&T and T-Mobile has significant potential to enhance opportunities for wireless innovation and mobile broadband deployment, which have demonstrated the capacity to measurably improve the quality of life of Americans with disabilities. We are excited by the potential for such results with the proposed integration of T-Mobile and its resources into the greater commitment of expanding opportunities for Americans with disabilities.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Tobin  
President & CEO  
United Spinal Association

CC: Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

75-20 Astoria Blvd. Jackson Heights, NY 11370, (800) 962-9629 (V), (866) 387-2196 (F)



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Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker

Rick Kaplan, *Chief Counsel and Senior Legal Advisor for Chairman Genachowski*

John Giusti, *Chief of Staff and Legal Advisor for Wireless, Public Safety and International for Commissioner Copps*

Angela E. Giancarlo, *Chief of Staff & Senior Legal Advisor, Wireless & International for Commissioner McDowell*

Louis Peraertz, *Legal Advisor, Wireless, International, and Public Safety for Commissioner Clyburn*

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## AT&T Acquisition of T-Mobile USA Holds Tremendous Potential Benefit for People with Disabilities

**Comment Submitted by: Paul J. Tobin, President & CEO, United Spinal Association**

Access to communications is critical for millions of Americans with spinal cord injuries or disorders, and their employers, families and friends. As FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski said in recent remarks to CTIA (the international association for the wireless telecommunications industry), "broadband is no longer a luxury. It's an essential platform for new products, economic growth and job creation - creating opportunities and opening markets that allow businesses to start, grow, and hire."

Wireless technologies are revolutionizing the daily realities of Americans living with disabilities by increasing opportunities for: civic and social participation; connecting with loved ones and support systems; accessing current information and other needed resources; and workforce participation.

AT&T has a long history of working with the disability community and offering new and innovative applications and devices that help people with disabilities participate competitively in the American workforce. United Spinal Association believes that AT&T demonstrates leadership in communication access through its Universal Design Policy, innovative employment efforts such as Operation Hand Salute and efforts to create ever more innovative and accessible products and services.

Accordingly, this merger could offer enhanced opportunities for wireless innovation and mobile broadband deployment, which have demonstrated the capacity to measurably improve the quality of life of Americans living with disabilities. We look forward to seeing integration of T-Mobile and its resources into the greater commitment of expanding opportunities for Americans living with disabilities.

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